

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 28, 2017

Chairman Ken Calvert
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Betty McCollum
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

We write with regard to the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB), urging you to fund and retain this small, but important safety agency in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies appropriations bill. Specifically, we request that you provide \$11.6 million for the CSB, which is consistent with CSB funding in recent years.

CSB is an independent, non-regulatory agency, modeled on the National Transportation Safety Board and created by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. CSB plays a unique role in investigating and making recommendations to prevent catastrophic industrial chemical accidents. The board conducts investigations to identify the root causes that led to an incident, be it a failure of safety protocols, technology, or other factors, and after scientific peer review, recommends preventive measures.

CSB does not regulate or penalize the chemical industry, but rather works with facility management, industry groups, unions, and voluntary standard setting organizations. CSB also provides oversight concerning the prevention of chemical accidents to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, and other government agencies. CSB reports may not be used in civil litigation, which encourages cooperative fact finding.

CSB has investigated more than 130 chemical incidents and issued 788 safety recommendations, 78% of which have been closed. The impact is safer workplaces and communities and reduced liabilities for business. For example: in New Jersey, fire code officials have been trained about the hazards of combustible dust; in New York City, a revised fire code now addresses hazardous chemical use; in Mississippi, safeguards have been adopted at oil and gas sites; in California, new safeguards help prevent risks from oil refineries; and in Connecticut, use of flammable gas for cleaning piping is prohibited. CSB recommendations have also led to improved training for firefighters about chemical dangers and safer school chemistry labs.

CSB's mission has long enjoyed bipartisan support as well as the support of industry and a wide array of other stakeholders. With less than a \$12 million dollar budget and 43 employees, the board is a prudent investment on behalf of the American taxpayer. We urge you to recognize the enormous service the CSB does for American workers and businesses alike by providing the requested funding in the FY2018 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact Vince Sarubbi of Mr. Norcross' staff at Vincent.Sarubbi@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Leonard Lance
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



Donald Payne Jr.
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Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress